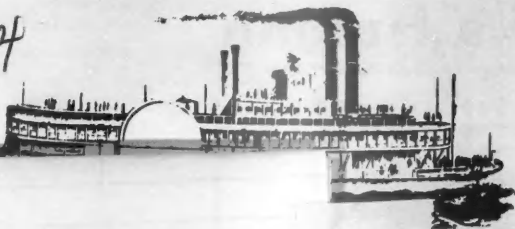


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# RIVER CURRENTS

SECOND COAST GUARD DISTRICT - JUNE 1979

## Flood Relief in the North

Story by SNPA R. Muller

Coast Guard personnel from the Second and Ninth Districts assisted people in the areas flooded by the Red River on the borders of North Dakota and Minnesota. Heavy snows followed by warm temperatures and rain caused record crests along the river, flooding large areas of land. Most of the Coast Guard involvement was in the Grand Forks, East Grand Forks area. At the height of the flooding, Coast Guard boats were in use 24 hours a day ferrying food, supplies, and workers to areas cut off by the high waters.

Approximately 210 people were evacuated from an apartment complex by Coast Guard boats and a Minnesota National Guard "duck." The Coast Guard also operated a shuttle service for workers who were maintaining the dikes in an area of East Grand Forks known as

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One of the many farm homes in the Grand Forks area affected by the record flooding. (Photos by: SNPA R. Muller)

## New District Commander



RADM Norman C. Venzke, new 2nd District Commander.

RADM Norman C. Venzke will relieve RADM Wayne E. Caldwell as Commander of the 2nd Coast Guard District June 9. RADM Caldwell is going to Washington to take charge of the Office of Marine Environment and Systems at Coast Guard Headquarters.

RADM Venzke's previous assignment was as Chief, Office of Operations at Coast Guard Headquarters. Graduating from the Coast Guard Academy in 1950 with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering, he then reported for duty as operations officer aboard the CGC WESTWIND. From December of 1958 to August of 1961, RADM Venzke was stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters as Chief, Operational Readiness Branch. For the next four years he served as instructor and as Chief, Weapons Section at the Coast Guard Academy. From 1965 to 1967 he

served as executive officer of the CGC EDISTO.

During his tour in South Viet Nam from April 1967 to April 1968, RADM Venzke was assigned the triple role of Commander, Coast Guard Division Eleven, Commander, Gulf of Thailand Surveillance Group, and as Fourth Coastal Zone Advisor. Upon returning to the United States, he served as Chief, Readiness Branch at Coast Guard Headquarters, until May of 1970.

In August of 1971, he assumed command of the CGC WESTWIND. Precommissioning Detail, and later, the Commanding Officer of the Cutter Polar Star. He was appointed Rear Admiral in February 1977.

RADM Venzke is no stranger to the 2nd District. He toured a number of 2nd District units during a visit here in July, 1978.

# Who's Afraid of a Human Relations Seminar?

SK2 Amber Cobb scares people.

It's hard to understand why. He has kind eyes and a nice smile, which must be an asset to him in his job as 2nd District Human Relations Counselor. He has a quiet, soothing manner, so just being with him is calming. SK2 Cobb has a knack of making the whole world slow down, and making whoever he is talking to feel like the most important person in the world.

Still, people drag their feet about going to human relations seminars that SK2 Cobb gives. He has some theories about why.

"There are a lot of different reasons for not wanting to go to a human relations seminar. Some people are afraid that their shipmates and friends might get to know their innermost



Viewing a videotape



Problem solving session at a human relations seminar held at Base St. Louis.

that time a group of around 25 to 30 Coast Guardsmen will view films and video tapes, break up into small groups for problem solving exercises, listen to lectures, and participate in discussions.

What can you learn at a human relations seminar? A lot about interpersonal communication, psychology and sociology, even a thing or two that might help you out on your next service wide.

SK2 Cobb says: "There are four goals in the human relations seminar program, basically, they are: first, make all of us aware of the differences in individuals, recognize that there is more than one way of looking at the world, and learn to respect the way others view life.

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secrets and feelings, and they are afraid that no one will like the "real" person behind the social mask we all wear.

"Others are afraid that there is going to be some kind of racial or sexual confrontation, that they are going to be bullied or challenged somehow, forced to give up their prejudices, one way or the other.

"A few think somebody might punch them out, or they'll find themselves in the middle of a race riot."

There is really nothing to be afraid of, SK2 Cobb explained.

"It's a class room situation, and nobody is put on the spot. You can keep all your secrets if you want to. And I've never had a fight yet. I'd never let things get that far out of hand."

SK2 Cobb is well qualified to control the seminars. In addition to the intensive 16 week course for human relations counselors at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida, SK2 Cobb has two years of college level sociology under his belt.

The seminars last about eight hours. SK2 Cobb has a firm policy of never keeping anyone past liberty.. During



SK2 Amber Cobb, Human Relations Counselor for the 2nd District.

(Continued from page 2)

Second, human relations is a kind of insurance. It is a way of making sure that every person knows his rights will be respected. Third, it improves communications at all levels of the Coast Guard, by showing us the barriers to communication, and by giving people a chance to talk to one another. Fourth, it helps all of us recognize the importance of our own behavior in influencing the way other people act. It lets you stand in the other man's shoes for a second. Your work will be easier if you understand something about the man you are working with, whether he is a chief or a seaman apprentice."

SK2 Cobb might have added that it's fun, too.

## Large Sums of Money Available

\$610. That's what was awarded to Mr. Frank Bowles, GS-12, Chief of the 2nd District's Procurement Branch, for his suggestion about buying a less expensive type of buoy floatation material. The suggestion will result in annual savings for the 2nd District of over \$12,000.

This is just one of 43 suggestions turned in during fiscal year 1979 so far, which is four more than the record-breaking 38 that were received during last fiscal year.

Other suggestions included: a means of paging the building sentries at the 2nd District offices, which made \$25 for QM1 Russel Moore, a Controller at 2nd District Operations Center; and a suggestion for a method of mounting lights on flood relief punts that earned \$75 for BMC H.W. Davis, also a 2nd District Controller.

If you could use a little extra money, look around! There are ideas for better ways of doing things that probably occur to you every day. Turn them into cash with a beneficial suggestion.



SK2 Cobb lectures on Human Relations at Base St. Louis.

## Flood Round-up: MSO St. Louis

During the flood season this year, Marine Safety Office (MSO) St. Louis was on a two hour stand-by for over a month. Crews from the MSO worked a two-state region, responding to calls for assistance in Peoria, Ill.; and a host of Missouri towns including Eureka, Creve Coeur, Valley Park, Times Beach, and Arnold, Mo.

"It wasn't any spectacular rescue work, just long hard hours and a lot of week-ends shot. We evacuated about 15 people and dozens of pets, provided transportation for local law enforcement officials to help prevent looting, and transported some utility officials to check on their equipment," LT G.W. Abrams of MSO St. Louis explained.

Personnel from MSO St. Louis that worked on flood relief this season include: CDR A.E. Tanos; LCDR Charles G. Hill; LT G.W. Abrams; LT W.T. Gibbs; LTJG R. H. Cordz; LTJG M.T. Brown; ENS J.T. Saboe; ENS Martin H. Finkel; MK3 A.C. Boeffer; BM3 J.E.

Conrad; BM2 D. L. Cook; DC1 R.D. Fritz; BM1 M.W. Gibbs; MK2 C.R. Rittenhouse; QM1 S.M. Tucker; BM3 M.C. Turner.

Easter Sunday, when most people were sitting down to family feasts and searching for colorful hard-boiled eggs, Coast Guardsmen from 2nd District offices and MSO St. Louis were assisting the Times Beach, Mo. Police Department patrol the flooded homes along the Meramec River to prevent looting.

The call for assistance came when a St. Louis County Police helicopter spotted a small boat acting strangely, apparently trying to hide from the helicopter. Looting was suspected. Coast Guard punts carried police on roving patrols the next two days without further incident.

Personnel from the District offices included: LTJG D. Manning, the on-scene on-scene commander; GM1 A.B. Kirk; QM1 R.G. Moulton; SK2 M.L. Whisler; SK2 K.P. Ponsetti; and Senior Special Agent J. Mangold.

## Coast Guardsman Scales Mountain

Story by: YN3 Gary R. Joseph



On March 1979, LTJG Lee W. Ellwein along with his brother Jay, and two companions, Todd Van Alstyne and Greg Kroetch scaled the summit of Gannette Peak, Wyoming, elevation 13,804 feet.

This was the climax of 14 days and 52 miles of grueling cross-country skiing and climbing over unmarked terrain. Temperatures reached as low as 30

degrees below zero at night.

There have been very few winter ascents on this mountain in the last decade.

LTJG Ellwein is presently Chief, Investigation Department at MSO Cincinnati and will be leaving this summer to become Supervisor, MSD Port Ponce, Puerto Rico.



(Continued from page 1)

"The Point." This area became a small island ringed by dikes and sandbags. The only means of access was by boat or high bottomed trucks. The only road open to trucks was under water and drivers had to follow a line of flags marking the submerged section. Coast Guard boats were standing by in case any drivers ended up in the water. This route into The Point was closed after a section of the road washed out by the flood waters.

The residents of The Point, at one time during their isolation, proclaimed independence from the United States. The name of this new country was a descriptive one: Isle de Sandbag. Their flag was a simple empty sandbag, which flew from flagpoles in the new nation. It was all in fun, but it provided a bit of needed relief from the strain.

After two weeks of duty, the last Coast Guardsmen were sent back to their

units. Personnel assisting from the Ninth District included: QM2 Dan Larson, BM2 Jim Weitz, MK2 Ray Carlyle, BM3 David Innes, SN Kevin Kohlase, from Group Duluth; MK3 D.M. Bellrive, RD1 K.R. Vangaasbeek, from MSO Duluth.

Personnel from the Second District included: LCDR S.E. Hungness (Deputy Disaster Control Group Commander for the first week), YN3 Dale Cotch, Lt. G.E. Kane (Reserve on two weeks active duty at the time), BM1, LeRoy Council, CDR L.Z. Katcharian, from MSO Minneapolis; BM3 John Schmieg, BM2 Doug Goff, SN David Tuma, SN Jim Thompson, from ANFAC Dubuque; BM3 Mark Winkle from MSD Davenport; BMC C.D. Jameson, BM2 M.J. Morton, from BOSDET Yankton; BM2 M.J. Roberts, SN D.B. Raz, from BOSDET Hastings; RD1 C.F. Dennis, station keeper, Reserve Station, St. Paul; BM1 R.J. Gallas, FA D.E. Moore, SN F.C. Keller, from CGC GASCONADE.



RD1 K.R. Vangaasbeek, MSO Duluth, and SN Kevin Kohlase, Group Duluth, relax during one of the few moments of quiet in the flood relief headquarters in East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

## Flood Round-up: MSO Nashville

On May 4 locally heavy rains swelled several creeks in the Nashville area beyond their banks, causing millions of dollars in property damage and killing at least three people, according to Lt. R. Jones of MSO Nashville. Lt. Jones said: "Fast action by Marine Safety office personnel saved the lives of between twelve and twenty people, or at the very least, rescued them from some extremely uncomfortable positions."

The Nashville MSO began flood relief action when MK3 Steve Oremrod awakened at three a.m. and stepped from his bed into a foot of water. He called Commander G.W. Conrad, and flood relief work began. Several Coast Guardsmen who lived in the Smyrna, Tenn. area set up a command center at BMC C.L. Loggins' home, borrowed a boat from a neighbor, and started evacuating motorists trapped on Interstate 24 by the rising waters. MK2 H.F. Swarts and DC3 R. Walker took five people from half submerged automobiles, then went to a trailer park surrounded by flood waters to assist the residents. In the meantime, MK3 D. Henderson and GM3 Larry Marshall began a long, round-about trip to a Nashville marina to pick-up the MSO's seventeen foot boat. They had to drive nearly 100 miles to avoid flooded highways.

By 5 a.m. ENS Richard Booth, Lt. R. Jones, and CDR G.W. Conrad had established a control team at MSO Nashville. A helicopter overflight was made, and BMC Loggins borrowed a 6 x 6 two-ton truck from a nearby National Guard outpost. The truck, the two boats and the helicopter then converged on an apartment complex surrounded by water.

YN2 R. Sumners remained in Smyrna to assist MK3 Oremrod in salvaging his personal effects.

As quickly as the waters rose, it receded. By five p.m. the next day, the emergency was over.

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